Varanasi airport:

1. 56% works of construction of new terminal building has been completed with expected date of completion by March, 2009. The delay occurred due to change in location and layout of the terminal building, late receipt of structural drawings and rains from June to September, 2008. Layout was revised due to site requirement. Letter has already been issued to the Agency to expedite the progress of work.

2. 25% works of expansion of apron, construction of taxiway, extension of runway and allied works with expected date of completion by June, 2009.

Delayed air operations at Delhi Airport

712. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is seized of the data collected by Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport's Operation Control Centre (OCC) which reveal that about 110 departures and 140 arrivals are delayed at IGI each day on an average due to operational and technical delays by airlines, such as untimely loading of baggage, delayed repairing and replacement of aircraft parts, cabin crew reporting late, catering trucks and fuel trucks arriving late and step ladders going missing; and

(b) if so, the remedial measures taken to run flights as per schedule at IGI Airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Average number of flights delayed due to operational and technical delay by airlines during last one month are about 15-20 departure and 15-20 arrivals per day. Other delays are due to various reasons like late arrival of flights, bad weather etc. However, for efficient and smooth process of airlines, Delhi International Airport Limited has done various improvement on infrastructure facilities at IGI airport like, at airside-commissioning of 3rd runway and associated taxiway, commissioning of additional rapid exit taxiways and fillets for improving the aircraft movement, increased CAT-III bays, introduced Power in Push Back for optimal use of airside bring operation and safety improvement, introduced three tier parking in Satellite Apron to accommodate more parking bays, commissioning of Rubber removal machine for upkeep of the runways. At international terminal, increased check in counters, increased X-ray machines, increased DFMD gates, increased immigration counters, implemented in-line X-ray baggage screening system, 4 single entry gates have been replaced by 4 double entry gates etc. Similarly, improved infrastructure facilities are provided at domestic departure and arrivals terminals and also at city side domestic and city side international.

Upgradation of Bhubneshwar Airport

713. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided for development and upgradation of Biju Patnaik Airport at Bhubaneshwar to International standards;

(b) if so, how much time new terminal building, aerobridges and expansion of apron is likely to take; and

(c) what budgetary allocations have been made to meet development, expansion and facilities of aerobridges etc. during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Construction of new Terminal Building at a cost of Rs. 145.54 crores to handle 800 passengers, at a time, with all modern facilities including two aerobridges have been planned at this airport for completion in March, 2010. Expansion of apron to accommodate additional aircraft parking stands has already been completed in June, 2008 at a cost of Rs. 14.97 crores.

(c) Total capital budget provision for development of Bhubaneswar airport in the current Financial Year RE 2008-09 is Rs. 14.24 crores.

Construction of helipads and runways in Uttarakhand

†714. SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the places in Uttarakhand where his Ministry is planning to construct helipads and runways which can be used by private airlines and chartered planes for the tourists and by the ambulance helicopters for extending relief during emergency alongwith the time by when the same would be completed;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) No request has been received, in the recent past, either from the State Government of Uttarakhand or airline operators for constructing new airstrip/Helipads or upgrading the existing airstrips in the State.

Facilities for the passengers with special needs

715. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a 'contact zone' has been set up at Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) Delhi for passengers with special needs;

(b) if so, whether the facilities like wheelchairs for disabled and assistance for unaccompanied minors will be provided free of charge;

(c) if so, whether Government proposes to set up such 'contact zone' at various Airports in the country especially in Himachal Pradesh where tourists are often found complaining about these facilities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.